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Venezuela vote results unreliable, says OAS body

By **Reuters**

July 30, 2024 6:53 AM PDT · Updated July 30, 2024

A view of the Organization of American States (OAS) headquarters, in Washington, U.S., April 10, 2024. REUTERS/Kylie Madry/File Photo Purchase Licensing Rights

July 30 (Reuters) - The Organization of American States' (OAS) election observation department said on Tuesday it cannot recognize the results by Venezuela's national electoral council declaring President Nicolas Maduro the winner of Sunday's disputed vote.

The 35-member regional body, which is to meet about Venezuela on Wednesday, said Venezuela's National Election Council (CNE) had shown itself biased towards the government.

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The CNE said Maduro had won with 51% of votes, but the opposition said the 73% of vote tallies to which it has access showed its candidate Edmundo Gonzalez had more than twice as many votes as Maduro.

Protests have erupted in Venezuela, while the United States and various Latin American leaders have rejected the results or said greater transparency is needed.

"The events of election night confirm a coordinated strategy, unfolding over recent months, to undermine the integrity of the electoral process," the OAS body's report said.

It contained accounts of illegalities and malpractices that occurred in this and past Venezuelan elections.

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"The evidence shows an effort by the regime to ignore the will of the majority expressed in the polls by millions of Venezuelan men and women," the report said.

"What happened shows, once again, that the CNE, its authorities and the Venezuelan electoral system are at the service of the executive power, not citizens."

Maduro says Venezuela has the best and most transparent vote system in the world, and accuses violent right-wing factions of seeking to overthrow him illegally with foreign support.

He has received backing from China, Russia and some left-leaning Latin American nations.

The OAS report concluded that without public documentary support for the election results announced, they could not be trusted and should not be recognized.

Reporting by Natalia Siniawski; Editing by Chizu Nomiyama and Andrew Cawthorne